

March 10, 2015

**Testimony Regarding:**

***S.B. No. 366 (COMM) AN ACT EXTENDING THE BAN ON THE USE OF LAWN CARE PESTICIDES TO SCHOOLS THAT HOUSE GRADES NINE TO TWELVE, INCLUSIVE, AND TO STATE FACILITIES.***

***S.B. No. 1063 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF PESTICIDES ON SCHOOL GROUNDS AND CERTAIN PUBLIC SPACES, AUTHORIZING THE USE OF CERTAIN MICROBIALS AND REESTABLISHING THE PESTICIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL.***

Good afternoon Senator Kennedy, Representative Albis, Senator Moore, Representative Arconti and the distinguished members of the Environmental Committee . My name is Robert Knapp, Athletic Facilitator for East Windsor High School located at 76 South Main Street, East Windsor CT. 06088.

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit testimony in regard to the K-8 ban implemented in 2010. In short I am requesting that no further restrictions be placed on pesticide use on athletic fields and that the current guidelines be modified / developed that allows each individual town and school district to use products responsibly via the Integrated Pest Management Program.

I understand that the environment is a major concern to all parties being represented at this hearing. However, as the athletic facilitator for the EWHS my primary concern in regard to field maintenance is student safety. Beginning in September of 2013 I have been working closely with the town field maintenance staff in regard to the field conditions at the high school. I was informed that as a result of the K-8 ban we have lost our ability to properly maintain our athletic fields with the use of EPA registered fertilizers / pest control products. Understanding that the ban stated K-8 the high school is held to the same standard due to the large amount of use by all of our youth programs. With the exception of over seeding our high school fields have had no chemical applications due to this ban. During the spring we had a student athlete receive a severe concussion after falling in the outfield. While the field was in my opinion playable the low grass density and field hardness added to the severity of this incident. In September of 2014 I was forced to close our varsity soccer, JV soccer and our baseball field. This was due to a total loss of the root system. This decision forced our athletic programs to move off site for the entire fall season. With no other regulation size field in town we played extra games at the opponent's sites as well as rented time at a local sports complex for the 3 teams to practice for 2 hours every day during the season. As I am sure you are all aware most high school fields require extensive use in order to implement a comprehensive athletic program. Prudent use of chemical treatments is necessary to allow maximum usage of those fields while also providing the safety standards one would expect from town officials. We can all agree that nothing we do will protect all athletes from injury but we surely can do a better job to minimize the number of injuries while also reduce the severity level by providing the best possible playing surface.

Additionally, since the July 1, 2010 K-8 ban, I am aware that schools to include EWHS have reported having problems with grub and tick populations, moles, poison ivy taking over fence lines, planting beds and boundary areas as well as poor compacted athletic fields just to name a few of the problems. All of these issues present a hazard to students because the ban does not allow any EPA registered pest controls to be used. This legislation would devastate high school athletic programs and contribute to the increase of injuries.

Sincerely,

*Robert J. Knapp*

Robert Knapp  
Athletic Facilitator  
East Windsor High School













